
Fire Department Management Review

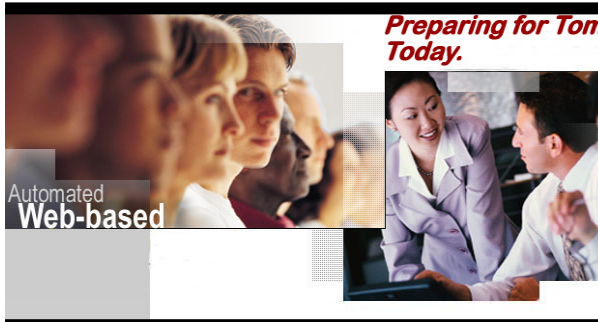


April 8, 2015

By:

Management Advisory Group
International, Inc.

*13580 Groupe Drive, Suite 200
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**MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY
GROUP
INTERNATIONAL,
INC.**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTING

April 8, 2015

Mr. Lehman Walker, City Manager
City of University City
6801 Delmar Blvd.
University City, MO 63130
(314) 505-8534

Dear Mr. Walker:

Management Advisory Group International, Inc. (MAG) is pleased to present the enclosed report for a Fire Department Management Review.

We appreciate the excellent assistance and information provided by City staff members, particularly management staff of the Fire and Finance Departments.

On behalf of MAG, I can say that it has been a pleasure to serve the City.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Donald C. Long, Ph.D.
President
Management Advisory Group International, Inc.
13580 Groupe Drive, Suite 200
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Report for a Fire Department Management Review

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Implementation Chart:

1.0 Introduction and Project Scope

1.1 Introduction

MAG was expected to complete the following tasks and offer recommendations for improvement in the Fire Department:

- ✓ Review budget, revenues, and expenses to provide recommendation on cost effectiveness.
- ✓ Review current staffing schedule to determine a more cost efficient method of scheduling Fire Department staff.
- ✓ Provide recommendations to minimize employees excessive overtime and sick time.
- ✓ Determine number of employees required to successfully provide fire safety.
- ✓ Review the structure of the Fire Department to determine required levels of supervision and management.

At the beginning of the project, MAG worked with the City to develop an understanding of the background, goals, and expectations for the project. We initially discussed the City's needs, made scheduling arrangements, determined lines of communications, and finalized details for the project.

MAG conducted interviews with, and gathered information from, key personnel. The project team interviewed key stakeholders, including Fire Department officials, Finance management, as well as departmental staff at the stations.

1.2 Project Scope

The project was established as somewhat limited in scope, with a focus on the staffing, structure, and possible methods to ensure efficient spending to provide department services.

This project focus has been narrower than a comprehensive operations, management, and organizational study.

2.0 Approach and Methodology

2.1 Overall Approach

This type of study is best undertaken through a cooperative effort that includes extensive feedback and discussion of issues, cost factors, and desired outcomes. This is generally accomplished through structured personal interactions with key officials and personnel, and interested and informed parties.

Generally, the first portion of the study included a **documentation of the issues and existing operations**. This documentation provided a base of information upon which recommendations for action have been based. MAG met with appropriate individuals in a cooperative data gathering work effort.

The second major portion of the study included creation of a series of recommendations focusing on the **project goals** for the study. Recommendations are balanced between the desired level of services and the cost-effectiveness of delivering those services. MAG is sensitive to the demands of emergency services and the limitations of public funding for critical services.

The third major portion of the scope of work is the preparation of a **plan of action**. *This will include time lines for action, responsibility for ensuring that actions are taken, and any fiscal impact anticipated as a result of each component of the plan.*

Stakeholder Input. A study such as this requires quality information from officials, management, Department personnel, and concerned parties. Accordingly, our approach included in-depth interviews with key individuals in the City management, fire administration and Finance Department to obtain valuable information.

Practical Solutions. Our ultimate goal is to provide you with a series of recommendations that can be used now and in the future that will serve as a “road map” for the future. Thus, our approach has concentrated on developing recommendations that can be implemented.

2.2 Methodology for the Project

PHASE I: INITIATE PROJECT

TASK 1.0: INITIATE PROJECT

Objectives:

- Gain an *understanding* of the project's background, goals, and expectations.
- Identify, in greater detail, *specific objectives* for the review, and assess how well this initial work plan accomplishes those objectives.
- Establish a *mutually agreed-upon* project work plan, time line, deliverables, and monitoring procedures that will lead to the successful accomplishment of all project objectives.
- Collect and review existing operational data, information, agreements, *relevant* policies and procedures, and any prior studies, audits, or reports.

Activities:

1.1 Meet with management, project management, key staff and others to establish working relationships, make logistical arrangements, and determine communication lines.

1.2 Discuss the objectives of the project. Identify policy and issue concerns to be addressed during the review.

1.3 *Obtain pertinent reports and background materials* relevant to the review, such as:

- organization charts and historical staffing data and deployment data;
- descriptions of staffing and deployment in meeting service demands;
- location and description of facilities and equipment;
- demographic and other data related to community growth;
- capital and operational budgets;
- funding data.

1.4 Finalize the:

- data collection approach;
- interview plan and tentative schedule and interview guide.

Deliverable:

- **Revised project work plan and time line as needed.**

PHASE II: OBTAIN STAKEHOLDER INPUT

TASK 2.0: CONDUCT LEADERSHIP INTERVIEWS

Objectives:

- Identify expected service levels for services.
- Identify views of officials concerning the operations of the department services.

Activities:

- 2.1 Work with the Project Manager to finalize the interviewee list.
- 2.2 Draft a comprehensive interview plan.
- 2.3 Establish a final interview schedule that is convenient to all parties.
- 2.4 Conduct interviews as scheduled.

Deliverable:

- **Feedback on interviews regarding expressed views towards existing programs, service levels, and perceived strengths and weaknesses, and related issues.**

TASK 3.0: CAPTURE INPUT FROM OPERATIONAL PARTICIPANTS

Objectives:

- Identify concerns and satisfactions at the operating department/staff level.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses that may exist.

Activities:

- 3.1 Develop interview questions on staffing, operations, and services provided.
- 3.2 Conduct interviews with key participants.
- 3.3 Conduct interviews with a representative number of staff at the stations.
- 3.4 Capture critical data in reference to the key RFP issues.
- 3.5 Review feedback obtained from these interviews.

Deliverable:

- **Findings to be used as part of the development of the draft and final reports.**

PHASE III: PREPARE ANALYSES AND DEVELOP CORE STRATEGIES

TASK 4.0: EVALUATE AND PREPARE INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Objectives:

- Build a series of recommendations focused on study objectives.

Activities:

- 5.1 Assess input in reference to best practices and desired outcomes.
- 5.2 Develop and provide recommendations on RFP noted issues.
- 5.3 Provide a *draft* report on the results of all previous tasks. The report contains:
 - a statement of study objectives, scope, and methodology;
 - specific report recommendations;
 - a plan and time frame for implementation.

Deliverables:

- A draft report.

TASK 6.0: PREPARE A FINAL REPORT AND PLAN

Objective:

- A final plan that identifies action steps to achieve the recommended outcomes.

Activities:

- 6.1 Discuss draft report findings and recommendations.
- 6.2 Receive and review technical feedback on the draft report.
- 6.3 Make technical adjustments to the draft to produce a final report

Deliverable:

- A final report that recommends action steps needed, and any cost impact.

Deliverables:

- Final Report

3.0 Services, Budget, Staffing, and Expenses

3.1 Services

The University City Fire Department provides emergency services, emergency medical care, fire prevention guidance, and safety education. The Fire Department protects the citizens and property of University City against the hazards of fire, natural or man-made disasters, and provides Emergency Medical Services and transportation.

Under the statewide mutual aid agreement, the City operates as a mutual aid partner with all municipalities and/or fire districts in St. Louis County, St. Louis City, Franklin, and St. Charles County areas, as well as statewide if requested.

The Fire Department participates in numerous public relations events during the year including block parties, neighborhood watch programs, children's birthday parties and numerous other events in which the public meets the firefighters. In addition, the Fire Department has taught hundreds of school age children fire safety lessons.

The Fire Department conducts fire prevention activities throughout the year, in addition to the safety and fire prevention talks at each school during *Fire Prevention Week*. The Department has held fire safety and fire extinguisher classes for several businesses and multi-resident buildings in the City. The Fire Department also provides and installs smoke detectors and replacement batteries at no charge to any City resident in need.

The annual budget states that the Fire Department is in the second year of a three (3) year project to pre-plan all commercial, educational, and places of assembly for improving the firehouse database and to meet Insurance Services Office (ISO) criteria. These pre-plans are intended to improve efficiency of future commercial inspections and provide building and occupancy information in times of emergency operations.

Firefighting apparatus are dispatched on EMS alarms only if no EMS unit is available or if the call is determined to be a life threat by the dispatcher taking the call. Also, the Captain or Battalion Chief can also make the determination to send a fire unit if they deem it necessary.

The ladder is dispatched on structure fires if/when it is in service. Ambulances are dispatched on structure fires also.

3.2 Budget

The following represents budget expenditures over the last few years. Personnel Services expenses increased by approximately 6% from 2012 to 2015, while costs for commodities nearly doubled. Contractual Services costs remained steady, while Capital Outlay expenses were highly variable during the period.

**TABLE 3-1
BUDGET
EXPENDITURES**

	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Original	FY 2014 Amended	FY 2014 Estimated	FY 2015 Budget
Personnel Services	3,568,866	3,570,726	3,846,000	3,846,000	3,842,800	3,791,200
Contractual Services	366,494	380,201	355,530	355,530	355,500	382,100
Commodities	115,413	157,108	180,400	180,400	176,800	219,300
Capital Outlay	6,750	4,931	256,700	256,700	256,700	85,000
Total	<u>4,057,523</u>	<u>4,112,966</u>	<u>4,638,630</u>	<u>4,638,630</u>	<u>4,631,800</u>	<u>4,477,600</u>

The FY 16 budget indicates the following totals:

- Personnel Services: \$3,588,000 (a decrease of 5% from 2015 budget)
- Contractual Services: \$ 460,600 (increase primarily due to fleet expenses)
- Commodities: \$ 226,875 (steady)
- Capital Outlay: \$ 28,000 (lower than 2015)
- Total: \$4,303,475 (a decrease of 3% from 2015 budget)

Of the Personnel Services total, most of the costs are due to salaries for full time positions. This line item (salaries – full time positions) shows a decrease of 7%, from \$3,023,300 in FY 15 to \$2,835,000 in FY 16.

3.3 Staffing Levels

The following table represents the authorized staffing levels for the last few years:

**TABLE 3-2
RECENT AUTHORIZED STAFFING LEVELS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Position Title	FY 2013 Authorized	FY 2014 Authorized	FY 2015 Authorized
Fire Chief	1	1	1
Assistant Fire Chief		1	1
Battalion Chief	3	3	3
Paramedic Fire Captain	9	9	9
Paramedic Firefighter	29	30	30
Firefighter	1	1	1
Executive Secretary	1	1	1
Total	44	46	46

3.4 Vehicles and Apparatus

The following staffed companies are in daily service:

- Engines (pumpers) - 1
- Trucks (Ladders) - 1
- Ambulances - 2

The Fire Department currently has 10 vehicles in service. The table shown below lists the category of the vehicle, the year of the vehicle, and the number of vehicles currently in service for that year:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Replacement Cycle in Years</u>
Chevy Crew Cab: 2004 (1)	8
Chevy Medtec Ambulance: 2009 (1)	8
Chevy Trailblazer/Tahoe: 2007 (2)	8
Chevy Trailblazer: 2008 (1)	8
E-One Rescue/Bronto Ladder: 2004 (1)	15
International/Osage Ambulance: 2012 (1)	5
Medtec Ambulance: 2001 (1)	5
Saulsbury Rescue Pumper: 1999 (1)	10
Pierce Rescue Pumper: 2012 (1)	10

4.0 Staff Scheduling

4.1 Scheduling of Shift Personnel

All shift employees listed below are on a 48 hour on, 96 hour off rotation. This work schedule is what is utilized in St. Louis County. Any modification to this rotation may affect the training and interaction of the University City Fire Department employees with those of other fire agencies in which automatic mutual currently exists.

- ✓ *Battalion Chiefs*
- ✓ *Captains*
- ✓ *Firefighter-Paramedics*
- ✓ *Firefighter*

A memo dated Feb. 27, 2014 from the Fire Chief to all UCFD employees essentially states that in order to reduce FLSA overtime, Fire Fighters, Paramedic Fire Fighter, and Fire Captains will receive four (4) paid-days off (“O” days) per year in addition to any other, sick, or compensatory time. Those personnel (Fire Fighters, Paramedic Fire Fighter, and Fire Captain) working the shift (A, B, or C) that have five (5) 48 day work cycles in a pay period will be required to take an “O” day some time during that pay period.

The memo goes on to state that “O” days “can be picked or they will be assigned depending on manpower or needs of the department.” There are several concerns regarding “O” days:

- ✓ Interviews with staff indicate there may be some confusion on Battalion Chief participation in “O” days, although MAG has been advised during the study that Battalion Chiefs are included.
- ✓ UCFD staff advises that the “O” days are not evenly distributed because of the “manpower or needs of the department” caveat.
- ✓ Personnel get more or fewer paid “O” days as a result of being transferred from one shift to another.
- ✓ The order often leads to additional overtime being paid due to sick leave being used by another FIRE FIGHTER after the “O” day is assigned and the assignee cannot be contacted to retract the “O” day assignment.

RECOMMENDATION 1: *Further internal study should be made on the use of “O” days to determine their effectiveness in reducing FLSA overtime.*

4.2 Shift Schedules

The following is a copy of the schedule used for 2013 for shift personnel. While the 48/96 schedule is not the norm in most parts of the country, it is an established practice in the greater St. Louis area. To break from this practice in the region is not compelling in terms of potential benefit, and is therefore not recommended for change by MAG. This scheduling approach requires excellent lost time (sick, annual, personal) policies and effective lost time management, and a clear departmental/City understanding of FLSA requirements.

RECOMMENDATION 2: *Review the City’s personnel policies and leave policies in the union agreement on a regular basis.*

RECOMMENDATION 3: *Ensure that the Finance Department and Fire Department management staff are in complete agreement on FLSA requirements and tracking of overtime due to FLSA.*

**TABLE 4-1
FIRE DEPARTMENT SHIFT SCHEDULE FOR 2013**

2013

48/96 Shift - A Crew / B Crew / C Crew

<u>January</u>							<u>February</u>							<u>March</u>							<u>April</u>										
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa				
			1	2	3	4	5						1	2							1	2				1	2	3	4	5	6
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				
27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30												
													31																		

<u>May</u>							<u>June</u>							<u>July</u>							<u>August</u>						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4						1		1	2	3	4	5	6						1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
							30																				

<u>September</u>							<u>October</u>							<u>November</u>							<u>December</u>						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	27	28	29	30	31	27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31						

5.0 Lost Time Review

5.1 Memorandum of Agreement

The Memorandum of Agreement, dated August 2010, between the City of University City and Local 2665, International Association of Firefighters, in Article V, Section 2, specifies that the work cycle of uniformed Fire personnel below the rank of Battalion Chief shall be 28 days or 216 or 240 hours in a cycle. Hours worked in excess of these totals, when authorized in advance by the Fire Chief, are customarily paid at the rate of time and one-half (1-1/2) of base.

The Agreement further notes that compensatory time may be granted by the Fire Chief with accumulation not to exceed 480 hours. Hours worked, including vacation hours, between 212 and 240 hours, in any one cycle shall be compensated for, in addition to their regular rate, at one-half of that employee's regular hourly rate.

- *It is MAG's belief that Federal regulations relating to Firefighters assigned shift duty require that overtime payments be made for time worked greater than 212 hours in a 28 day payroll period. We therefore do not understand the statement referring to "216 and 240 hours in a cycle" requiring time and one-half compensation, or in the second paragraph, "212 or 240 hours" in any one cycle requiring compensation in addition to their regular rate, one-half of their regular rate.*

The Memorandum of Agreement notes that scheduled FLSA overtime will not be paid only in the event that an employee is absent during that same 28 day cycle due to usage of sick time or leave without pay. In addition, light duty hours worked due to an off duty injury will not qualify for scheduled FLSA overtime. Administrative leave pending investigation is not to apply toward hours worked for the overtime rate of pay at one and one-half of that employee's regular hourly rate. Paid sick leave and comp time is not to affect fire department employees' emergency and/or unscheduled overtime rate of pay at one and one-half of that employee's regular hourly rate.

- *MAG has concerns regarding the above paragraph where it indicates that "light duty" hours will NOT qualify for scheduled FLSA overtime. It is our understanding that any hours actually worked must be included in FLSA accounting of hours worked within a pay period. We also are concerned that a Firefighter assigned to working a 40 hour week while on "light duty" may not be eligible for the Firefighter exception and may be due overtime payments after 160 hours in the 28 day pay period.*

City of University City, Missouri

The hourly rate for full-time Firefighters, Paramedic Firefighters, and Paramedic Fire Captains who according to Section 2, have a work cycle of 28 days, are to have their hourly rate computed multiplying the monthly rate plus incentive pay by 12, dividing that product by 2,912.

RECOMMENDATION 4: MAG suggests that FLSA requirements for light duty hours be reviewed with an attorney experienced in FLSA hour calculation as related to the special firefighter exception.

5.2 Overtime Costs

The City’s annual budget indicates that overtime costs for the Fire Department have exceeded \$100,000 for the last several years. In FY 2012, \$130,873 was spent on overtime. In FY 2013, \$128,610 was spent on overtime. An amount of \$120,000 was budgeted and estimated for 2014, although the actual amount was \$225,165, due to suspensions within the Department. The FY 2015 budget anticipates less to be spent on overtime, at \$94,000.

The following table from the FY 2015 budget indicates overtime costs, as part of Personnel Services.

**TABLE 5-1
RECENT OVERTIME COSTS IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Original	FY 2014 Amended	FY 2014 Estimated	FY 2015 Budget	% over FY 2014
Personnel Services							
5001 Salaries - Full-Time	2,859,154	2,839,296	3,080,000	3,080,000	3,080,000	3,070,300	0%
5380 Overtime	130,873	128,610	120,000	120,000	120,000	94,000	-22%
5420 Workers Compensation	177,857	191,246	175,000	175,000	175,000	180,000	3%
5460 Medical Insurance	327,292	341,812	393,000	393,000	390,000	367,000	-7%
5660 Social Security Contributions	6,965	2,652	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	0%
5700 Clothing Allowance	25,700	25,250	26,000	26,000	25,800	26,000	0%
5740 Pension Contribution Nonunif.	3,628	3,567	5,000	5,000	5,000	4,900	-2%
5900 Medicare	37,397	38,293	44,000	44,000	44,000	46,000	5%
Sub-Total Personnel Services	3,568,866	3,570,726	3,846,000	3,846,000	3,842,800	3,791,200	-1%
Total	4,057,523	4,112,966	4,638,630	4,638,630	4,631,800	4,477,600	-3%

5.3 FLSA Overtime Pay

There appears to be some misunderstanding between the University City Fire Department (UCFD) Administration and the University City Finance Office regarding FLSA overtime.

- ✓ In the UCFD view, the uniformed personnel working more than 212 hours in a pay period (28 days) are awarded an additional sum equal to 50% of their salary for those hours over 212.
- ✓ The Finance Office views those hours over 212 in a pay period as overtime compensation at a 1.5 of their regular rate of pay.
- ✓ This difference in perspective apparently effects which budget fund the FLSA compensation is posted to, "Regular Salary" or "FLSA Overtime".
- ✓ If posted to "FLSA Overtime" the City does not contribute toward the UCFD's pension plan. If posted to the "Regular Salary" fund, the City does contribute to the pension fund.

RECOMMENDATION 5: *The City should obtain legal guidance on FLSA overtime issues, including advice on whether the basis for pension pay-outs is base pay or gross pay (including any overtime or bonuses earned).*

5.4 Policy on Acting in Higher Level Positions

Captains and Fire Fighters receive compensatory time when acting in upgraded positions (Firefighters as Captains, Captains as Battalion Chiefs, for 12 hours or more.

RECOMMENDATION 6: *Policy should change to providing immediate "bonus" for temporary "upgrades" to higher paid positions. This will avoid future overtime costs. The "acting" bonus should equate to less than the full cost of providing overtime compensation for personnel filling in for the party using "upgrade" compensatory time.*

RECOMMENDATION 7: *The City should track "sick leave" on the basis of cost as well as hours. The shift schedule of the Fire Department may make comparing hour for hour inappropriate. Using the various pay schedules in addition to "hours" might provide a clearer picture.*

5.5 Sick Leave

Article VI of the Memorandum of Agreement states that effective July 1, 1993, sick leave with pay shall be granted to all regular, full-time Firefighters, Paramedic Firefighters, and Paramedic Fire Captains at the rate of twelve (12) hours for each full calendar month of service. Sick leave will be granted in the case of actual sickness or disability of the Firefighter or Paramedic Firefighter.

While the Memorandum of Agreement states that unused sick leave may be accumulated to total not more than forty-two (42) working days or 1008 hours, Administrative Regulation No. 8, dated 2011, indicates that the full-time regular fire personnel working the average fifty-six (56)-hour workweek shall be allowed a total maximum accumulation of not more than fifty (50) working days.

The Department has indicated that sick leave is available to employees who are sick or must remain at home in order to care for an ill child. The employee must contact Fire Station #1 by 06:30 of the day being taken as "sick" and speak to an officer and provide information such as reason, location where the employee may be contacted during this time frame, and when the employee expects to return to duty. A doctor's letter must be presented to the Fire Chief for sick days off over two (2) days.

A summary of sick hours, by department, was provided to the study team. It indicates that the highest user of sick leave is the Fire Department, with 5,687 hours, or 37.44% of the City's total usage. The Fire Department, in 2014, used twice as much sick leave as did the Police Department employees, who used 2,806 hours.

During 2013, the Fire Department employees used 4,486 hours, or 29.98% of the total City hours used for sick leave. The table on the following page summarizes the use of sick hours in 2014.

**TABLE 5-2
2014 SICK HOURS USED IN THE CITY DEPARTMENTS**

	Hours	Amount	% of Total
Legislative	4	113	0.03%
Administration	40	2,550	0.26%
Human Resources	22	580	0.14%
Finance	300	6,383	1.97%
Municipal Court	255	5,079	1.68%
Police	2,806	77,806	18.47%
Fire	5,687	131,388	37.44%
Admin & Engineer	186	4,729	1.22%
Street	901	18,200	5.93%
Facility Maintenance	178	3,292	1.17%
Community Development	958	22,042	6.30%
Recreation	1,554	34,867	10.23%
Fleet	524	13,391	3.45%
Solid Waste	720	15,886	4.74%
Library	1,056	21,407	6.95%
	15,190	357,711	100.00%

It appears that UCFD personnel may be using sick leave for unauthorized/unintended (from the City’s point of view) purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 8: *The City should investigate implementing a “personal time” paid leave in place of the various paid leaves now in use, and, implementing a system of pay for unused “personal time” (or currently sick leave).*

5.6 Vacation Leave

Administrative Regulation No. 9, dated October 1, 2014, establishes that Fire Department personnel who have not yet completed five (5) years of service and who work an average fifty-six (56) hour work week, shall compute vacation leave at seven-twelfths (7/12ths) of a 24-hour day a month or fourteen (14) hours of annual leave credit with no more than seven (7) working days per calendar year. Those employees of the Fire Department having completed five (5) years of service are to receive fifteen (15) hours of annual leave credit. Fire Department employees having completed ten (10) years of service are to receive eighteen (18) hours of annual leave credit; and those having completed twenty (20) years of service are to receive twenty-four (24) hours of annual leave credit for each full, complete month of service.

- (a) The time at which an employee is to take his/her vacation is to be determined by the supervising official with due regard for the wishes of the employee and particular regard for the needs of the service.
- (b) Vacation time is not permitted to accrue to an amount beyond that granted annually except under such unusual workload circumstances that it has been impossible for the employee to take his/her vacation and then only with the written request to the Human Resource Manager for the City Manager's approval. In no event shall vacation leave be permitted to accrue beyond that accumulated in a two-year period. Any vacation balances in excess of the allowed maximums shall be stricken from the record.

The Department has indicated to MAG that Fire crews are given the opportunity to choose vacation days according to seniority in October/November of the prior year. These vacation choices are made after all "O" days have been accounted for. These vacation choices may be one day or two consecutive days. Also allowed are the last day of one set of days and the first day of a second set of days. Employees may also "Pass" their selection opportunity. Any further vacation requests must be submitted to the Fire Chief's Office or the employee's Battalion Chief for approval.

The Department has further indicated that, assuming a crew is at full staff (14), two individuals are allowed to be scheduled off at one time, a third is allowed off, but must report to the station first. Two (2) may be prescheduled, and another one (1) once staffing is determined to not drop below the minimum of eleven (11).

Vacation days are accrued throughout the year and the amount earned is based on length of employment. Vacation is not to be taken unless it has already been accrued.

A full year of vacation time is allowed to be carried over into the following year, but must be utilized by the end of that year. A maximum of two years may be carried over with the permission of the City Manager per University City Administrative Regulations.

5.7 Shift Trade Policy

The Department indicated that a maximum of nine (9) shift trades are allowed per employee per year, with the exception of the Union Shop Steward or other Union Officers, who are allowed unlimited trades. Any trade must be taken in 12 hour increments (i.e. 12 of 24 hours).

In order to replace a Battalion Chief who is absent, a Captain is designated as the Acting Battalion Chief and receives four (4) hours of Compensatory Time for anything over 12 hours.

6.0 Staffing Levels

Article XIII of the Memorandum of Agreement, states that the City will strive to maintain a staffing of at least 15 personnel per crew. However in the event of a reduction in force, employees will be laid off by seniority regardless of job classification. Seniority is defined as length of continuous service from latest date of employment. No new employee is to be hired until the laid off employee has been given an opportunity to return to work.

Article XIV of the Memorandum of Agreement specifies **Management Rights**. The Union recognizes that any and all rights concerned with the management of the Fire Department and the direction of the working forces are exclusively that of the City except where expressly and specifically modified, limited and restricted by the provisions of the Memorandum. Such functions include, but are not limited to:

- the right to select and hire, to assign work to employees;
- promote to a better position;
- suspend, to demote, to discipline, to discharge for cause, to establish and maintain rules governing the employee's conduct and work;
- establish personal appearance standards;
- **determine the number of employees required in any function or on any job;**
- relieve employees from duty because of lack of work, or for other legitimate reasons, the right to set work schedule or to change schedules already set, the right to study, determine and regulate the methods, quantity, quality and type of work;
- **the right to control overtime and the necessity of employees working overtime;**
- the right to determine the number, location, and types of its facilities and operations;
- the right to determine the extent to which any operation or part or all of its operation or move the same, the right to change methods or procedures or to use any equipment; and,
- the right to change or introduce new or improved equipment, procedures, or facilities, and the right to determine the methods and means of operation.

The Department has indicated that the minimum staffing for companies is as follows:

- *Engines (pumpers) - 3*
- *Trucks (Ladders) - 3*
- *Ambulances -2*

There are currently three (3) Captain positions authorized on each shift resulting in Captains often functioning as Firefighters but being compensated as Captains. This staffing level for Captains appears to be a holdover from three stations within the City. Operationally, there is no compelling need for three (3) Captains on each shift within the rank structure.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Limit the number of budgeted Captain positions to two (2) per shift or six (6) total, compared to the current nine (9) authorized Fire Captain positions.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Limit the number of budgeted Firefighter/Paramedic or Firefighter positions to 24, from the current 31 budgeted positions in this class, and use part-time Paramedic/Firefighters to achieve minimum staffing levels.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Limit the number of overall staffing level of regular, full-time positions to 36, compared to the current 46 authorized positions.

MAG recommends the following staffing (after a one year trial with current staffing but using Part Time Fire Fighters instead of overtime whenever possible & paying for upgrades with cash, NOT owed time:

EACH SHIFT FULL-TIME PERSONNEL (A, B, & C)

8 Paramedic-Firefighters (4 for Ambulances 4 for Engines)
2 Captains (1 per station)
1 Battalion Chief

TOTAL SHIFT FULL-TIME PERSONEL:

24 Paramedic-Firefighters
6 Captains
3 Battalion Chiefs

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL:

1 Fire Chief
1 Assistant Chief
1 Executive Secretary

GRAND TOTAL FULL-TIME FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL:

24 Paramedic-Firefighters

6 Captains
3 Battalion Chiefs
1 Assistant Chief
1 Fire Chief
1 Executive Secretary

36 Total

This level of regular, full-time staffing compares to the current 46 authorized positions.

The following assumptions are included as part of determining cost savings:

- Captain empty slots are filled with upgraded Firefighters.
- Part-time Firefighters are used to cover for upgraded Firefighters.
- As many as two (2) part-time-Firefighters may be used at one time.
- Unusual situations (e.g., multiple paid leaves on any one day, late notice of needed leave, etc.) will alter results.

Establishing a true minimum number of regular, full-time positions to provide shift services is a highly cost efficient approach to staffing within the Fire Department. This strategy relies on the use of part-time Firefighter/Paramedics or Firefighters who have achieved the appropriate level of certifications to serve in these capacities.

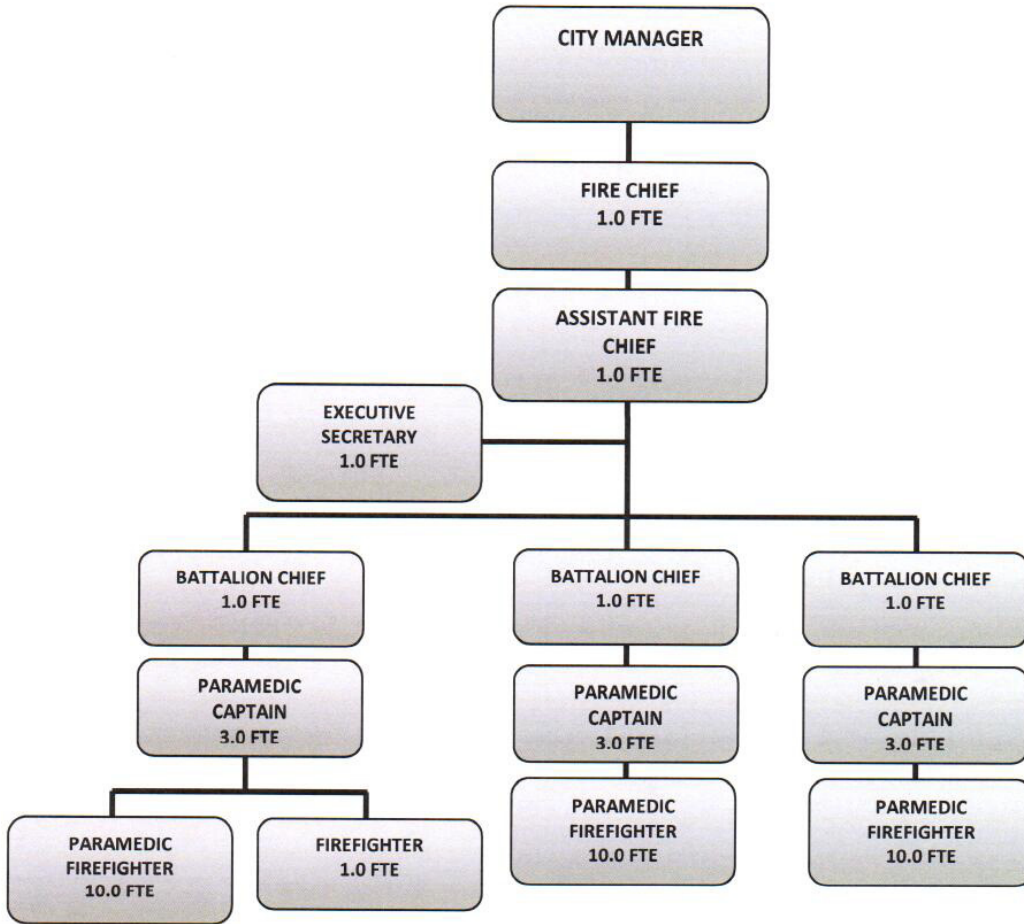
The market cost for part-time certified positions appears to be approximately \$17 per hour at this time. This compares to the actual average for current Paramedic/Firefighter positions within the Fire Department of \$21.31 per hour. The City would realize cost savings on base salary of \$4 for every hour worked. Assuming approximately 20,384 hours per year for the difference of the current 31 Paramedic/Firefighter positions versus the recommended 24 Paramedic/Firefighter positions, the cost savings in base pay alone would equate to approximately \$81,536.

In addition, Finance Department documents indicate an average of 40% costs in benefits. The use of part-time Paramedic/Firefighter certified personnel would preclude the cost of those benefits, resulting in an additional current annualized savings of \$32,614.

The total annualized savings for reducing the total number of regular, full-time Paramedic/Firefighter positions and using part-time certified personnel is therefore \$114,150.

7.0 Organizational Structure

The current structure, below, indicates a total of 46 full time positions. MAG endorses the current organizational structure itself as appropriate for the organization and the services provided. The number of full-time positions required to maintain service levels is limited to 36 overall, supplemented by part-time certified personnel.



The number of positions assigned within the Department is, however, recommended for change in the following levels:

- Current Captain positions: 9 Recommended Captain positions: 6
- Current Paramedic FF's/FF: 31 Recommended Paramedic FF's/FF: 24

During the project, the rank structure was reviewed for appropriateness. The position of Assistant Fire Chief was considered, as well as the Captain, Paramedic/Firefighter and

Firefighter positions.

The duties of the Assistant Fire Chief position includes:

- Fire Marshal (Coordination)
- Training Coordinator
- National Fire Incident Reporting System Oversight
- Fire Investigator

The Assistant Fire Chief position is a full-time job and should not be deleted or used to fill for Battalion Chief leaves on a regular basis. The Assistant Fire Chief could fill in during regular working hours on an irregular basis when he/the Chief believes he can postpone (not ignore) his regular duties.

RECOMMENDATION 12: *Maintain the position of Assistant Fire Chief.*

8.0 Additional Operational and Policy Recommendations

8.1 Quints

The utilization of Quint apparatus would significantly enhance the level of service delivered to the City with no increase in staffing.

RECOMMENDATION 13: *Consider the purchase of smaller, less expensive, more maneuverable, (than current Truck) quint apparatus for each station as soon as fiscally feasible.*

8.2 Dispatch

All UCFD personnel interviewed agreed that current dispatching practices are inhibiting the UCFD's efforts to deliver effective, efficient, fire protection and emergency medical services.

RECOMMENDATION 14: *Effort and funding should be provided to establish emergency medical dispatch services through Dispatcher training and installation of EMS dispatch software.*

RECOMMENDATION 15: *Appoint a joint committee to improve dispatch services for the UCFD.*

8.3 Shift Trading

Captains and Fire Fighters are currently allowed to trade shifts with each other. Further, Captains are on the same call-back list for overtime as Fire Fighters. This can result in situations where Captains are working as Fire Fighters but receiving Captains compensation and in other cases a company running without a regular Captain.

RECOMMENDATION 16: *A policy should be implemented requiring rank for rank trades and overtime hiring.*

8.4 Vacation Policy

RECOMMENDATION 17: *Vacation selections for Captains and Fire Fighters should be separated so that only a single Captain per shift is allowed on vacation at the same time. This will provide a larger pool of Captains to fill for vacationing Captains.*

8.5 Saint Louis County Fire Standards Commission

It appears that the Saint Louis County Fire Standards Commission may be unreasonably requiring SLCFSC Academy attendance when an experienced Firefighter is hired by UCFD.

RECOMMENDATION 18: *The UC City Attorney should determine the authority of the SLCFSC to require such training.*

8.6 Paramedic Hiring

Currently the UCFD hires only certified Paramedics as Fire Fighters resulting in as many as two Paramedics being on duty for both ambulances and fire fighting companies at the same time. This is in excess of the National practice which typically requires a single paramedic on the scene to practice paramedic procedures. This may result in some senior Paramedic Captains and Fire Fighters having far fewer opportunities to practice their skills that would be desirable. This can be mediated by a Department policy requiring every Paramedic-Firefighter to serve on the ambulance not less than 24 hours in a pay period to qualify for the Paramedic bonus. This should be certified by the Battalion Chiefs.

Although there is a cost associated with hiring only Firefighters with Paramedic licensing/certification, with a small department such as the University City Fire Department, it seems operationally reasonable to continue the practice. To do otherwise would greatly complicate certain operational issues, e.g., shift trading; overtime hiring, trading personnel assignments between Engine/Truck and Ambulance for short periods when a station experiences unusually heavy EMS demand. This flexibility seems particularly desirable when an agency uses the 48 hour shift pattern.

RECOMMENDATION 19: *Establish Paramedic bonus as eight (8) Paramedic-Firefighters, two (2) Captains and one (1) Battalion Chief per shift*

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW					
Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
1	Further internal study should be made on the use of "O" days to determine their effectiveness in reducing FLSA overtime.	Fire Chief, Finance Director, City Manager	Dec. 2015	Scheduling efficiency and potential reduction of overtime costs.	TBD
2	Review the City's personnel policies and leave policies in the union agreement on a regular basis	Fire Chief, City Attorney, City Manager	Ongoing	Internal consistency of City and union agreement policies.	Undetermined.
3	Ensure that the Finance Department and Fire Department management staff are in complete agreement on FLSA requirements and tracking of overtime due to FLSA.	Fire Chief, Finance Director, City Manager	Ongoing	Insure proper allocation of overtime costs.	Control of overtime costs.

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW					
Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
4	Review FLSA requirements for light duty hours with an attorney experienced in FLSA hour calculation as related to the special firefighter exception.	Fire Chief, City Attorney, City Manager	Ongoing	Reduce possibility of negative legal action and possible reduction of overtime costs.	Possible cost avoidance for legal costs/fees.
5	Obtain legal guidance on FLSA overtime issues, including advice on whether the basis for pension pay-outs is base pay or gross pay (including any overtime or bonuses earned).	Fire Chief, City Attorney, City Manager	Dec. 2015	Reduce possibility of negative legal action.	Detour possible legal costs.
6	Change policy to providing immediate "bonus" for temporary "upgrades" to higher paid positions. The "acting" bonus should equate to less than the full cost of providing overtime compensation for personnel filling in for the party using "upgrade" compensatory time.	Fire Chief, City Attorney, City Manager	July 2015	Avoid future overtime costs	TBD

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW					
Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
7	Track "sick leave" on the basis of cost as well as hours. The shift schedule of the Fire Department may make comparing hour for hour inappropriate.	Finance Director	July 2015	Improved accuracy in comparison of sick leave costs.	None.
8	Investigate implementing a "personal time" paid leave in place of the various paid leaves now in use, and, implementing a system of pay for unused "personal time" (or currently sick leave).	Finance Director, City Manager	Dec 2015	Potential reduction of lost time and personnel costs.	TBD
9	Limit the number of budgeted Captain positions to two (2) per shift or six (6) total, compared to the current nine (9) authorized Fire Captain positions.	City Council, City Manager	FY 2016 budget	Reduction of three (3) Fire Captain positions. Appropriate rank structure.	\$228,717 annualized base salary plus average 40% benefits of \$91,486, for an annualized total of \$320,203 in annual savings or cost avoidance. This savings is minimized by the cost to cover lost time for Captain slots of \$50,359. Net annual savings: \$269,844

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW					
Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
10	Limit the number of budgeted Firefighter/Paramedic or Firefighter positions to 24, from the current 31 budgeted positions in this class, and use part-time Paramedic/Firefighters to achieve minimum staffing levels.	City Council, City Manager	FY 2016 budget	Reduction of seven (7) regular, full-time positions. Staffing strategy utilizes a combination of full-time and part-time certified personnel. Retains level of services in the community.	Annualized total of \$114,150 in annual savings or cost avoidance
11	Limit the number of overall staffing level of regular, full-time positions to 36, compared to the current 46 authorized positions	City Council, City Manager	FY 2016 budget	Reduction of seven (7) regular, full-time positions. Staffing strategy utilizes a combination of full-time and part-time certified personnel. Retains level of services in the community.	Savings captured in recommendations 9 and 10.
12	Maintain the position of Assistant Fire Chief.	City Council, City Manager	Ongoing	Continues current attention to critical tasks.	None.

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW					
Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
13	Consider the purchase of smaller, less expensive, more maneuverable, (than current Truck) quint apparatus for each station.	Fire Chief, City Council, City Manager	When fiscally feasible.	Provide UCFD with more appropriate apparatus resulting in more effective fire and life safety and reduction in maintenance costs for existing inefficient, high maintenance apparatus.	Significant investment in new apparatus; reduced maintenance costs.
14	Provide effort and funding to establish emergency medical dispatch services through Dispatcher training and installation of EMS dispatch software.	Fire Chief, Police Chief, City Council, City Manager	FY 2016	Significant improvement in the level of emergency medical services provided UC citizens.	Minimal costs.
15	Appoint a joint committee to improve dispatch services for the UCFD.	City Manager	FY 2016	Significant improvement in the level of emergency medical and fire protection services provided UC citizens.	Possible minimal overtime costs for selected personnel.

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW					
Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
16	Implement a policy requiring rank for rank trades and overtime hiring.	Fire Chief, City Manager	FY 2016	More efficient and effective fire and life safety services.	Possible reduction in overtime costs.
17	Vacation selections for Captains and Firefighters should be separated so that only a single Captain per shift is allowed on vacation at the same time.	Fire Chief, City Manager	FY 2016	More efficient and effective fire and life safety services.	Possible reduction in overtime costs.
18	The UC City Attorney should determine the authority of the Saint Louis County Fire Standards Commission to require such training.	City Attorney, City Manager	FY 2015	Reduce recruitment and hiring costs for new Paramedic-Firefighters.	TBD

**UNIVERSITY CITY, MO
FIRE DEPARTMENT REVIEW**

Rec. #	Action Step	Responsibility	Estimated Completion	Impact	Projected Savings or (Costs)
19	Establish Paramedic bonus as eight (8) <u>Paramedic-Firefighters</u> , two (2) Captains and one (1) Battalion Chief per shift	Fire Chief, City Manager	FY 2016	Reduce personnel costs.	TBD